

Comment.

If your Prohibitionist agriculturalist were consistent surely he would decline to supply brewers and distillers with grain. But we are inclined to think he is hardly built that way.

Word reaches us from all quarters that delegates are coming to attend the great convention in this city next week. It will undoubtedly be the biggest gathering of members of the trade ever held.

A MEETING of the trade in the County of Simcoe will be held in Fyfe's hall, Barrie, on Thursday at 1 P.M. to organize a county association, and to choose delegates to attend the big convention in Toronto, April 4th.

The death last week in Italy of Lady Macpherson, wife of Sir David Macpherson and daughter of the late Wm. Molson, founder of Molson's Bank, brings to mind the fact that the Molson family have been in the brewery business at Montreal for 110 years.

The area of the Argentine Republic sown with wheat last year was 6,100,000 acres against only 490,000 acres in 1880. What do our farmers think of the prospects for an advance in wheat? And what are they going to do with their barley and rye when we have Prohibition?

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I., is having an election for the Scott Act. Reports say that the Act will carry as those who wish to carry on an unlicensed trade have united with the extreme temperance people in its support. Moderate temperance men and the best class of the trade are opposing the act.

A NEW distillery in the immediate vicinity of Toronto is one of the business prospects for this spring. Certain gentlemen of means have the matter under advisement, and we are informed have already purchased a site which is in every way adapted for the enterprise. There is a sufficiency of capital back of the concern as well as plenty of business enterprise.

It is generally conceded that a hotel-keeper who dabbles in politics is foolish, but yet he is entitled to his opinions the same as any other man. However, in a country where politicians think that he is the individual of all others to be taxed in their interest he is undoubtedly wise to keep a tight tongue and to confine his ideas to thinking and the silent ballot.

A WASHINGTON doctor says: "If we drink the smallest quantity of unfiltered or unboiled water we are liable to swallow a regiment of parasites, including the egg of the lumbricoid worm." "A lumbricoid worm" is a creature of which the earth worm is a species. It is an intestinal parasite that cannot and does not live in a whiskey, beer or any other fermented liquor.

An English paper wants to know if the temperance party are willing to make up the hundred million dollars deficit that would figure in the revenue if Prohibition were enacted by a tax of one cent on every cup of tea or coffee, bottle of soda water or ginger beer drunk in the country. It also asks the pertinent question whether any proportion of Britain's great men have been teetotalers.

It is announced that the Prohibitionists of Brant have decided to pledge their support to Hon. A. S. Hardy at the forthcoming general election. Surely our friends are a little premature in arriving at this decision. Supposing on the other side a total abstainer—and Mr. Hardy has acknowledged he is not one of that kind—is brought out, how will they reconcile their votes with their consciences?

It is possible to have too much of a good thing, as the vine-growers in the south of France are discovering. There the vintage has been so superabundant that although wine is offered at two cents a quart it fails to find buyers. Its owners are puzzled what to do with it. Their plight reminds one of that of the Caucasian wheat-growers, who, a couple of years ago, were forced to convert wheat and maize into fuel, nature having given them more than they could use themselves or sell on the spot, and than the railways could carry away.

"If," writes a friend temporarily resident in London, but thoroughly up in English political affairs, "Sir William Harcourt in his Budget speech, anticipates a serious reduction of receipts due to the decreased consumption of beer and spirits, and provides for the deficit by imposing taxes on other articles, say lemonade and ginger-beer, we shall know that he means business regarding the Local Option Bill. But if, on the other hand, he anticipates no diminution of the yield from the customs and excise duties, we shall know that he is simply humbugging the teetotalers."

"PROHIBITION is more important than tariff or free trade," cries a temperance paper in Nova Scotia. Perhaps it is in the eyes of those who advocate it; but we do wish our contemporary would, coming down to facts and figures, calculate the amount of capital that would be banished by Prohibition from the country; the amount of grain the farmers would lose the sale of; the number of people who would be thrown out of employment; the loss of revenue that would accrue and that would have to be made up, and the burden of extra taxation that would have to be borne by the country at large. We quite agree with our contemporary that "leaving morals out of consideration," the question, taking it in the aggregate, is a pretty big one, and one that we fear it will find hard to answer to the satisfaction of any save the unreasoning.

We read in the *Liberty Review*, a paper published in the liberal interests in England, that question No. 10 in the election agent's examination paper issued by the National Liberal Federation runs thus: "What form of words would you

advise for the use of a candidate anxious to pledge himself to the Temperance party without losing the support of the liquor interest." We should like to know what the replies were. It is a common trick with candidates to try and ride both horses without letting either know, but when a whole party unblushingly goes in for the accomplishment of such a performance it proves that British politicians are every whit as bad as Canadian, and that our only friend is ourself. There is some consolation in the fact that if members of the trade are fooled the fellows on the other side are being hoodwinked just as badly, if not more so.

TALK of Prohibition has put the busy brain of the inventor to work with a view of ascertaining how the enactment, if it ever assumes to become such, can be circumvented. Many are the devices reported up to date; one being a condensation in the form of a lozenge that nobody would ever suspect; another is an innocent-looking book that contains real reading matter as well as prime whiskey; one more is a perfume bottle, and yet another is a cigar properly colored and fixed up. With the ages men, and women too, have become very cunning, and there is plenty of indication that if our brewers and distillers should be compelled to shut down, the trade would simply be transferred to smugglers and cheats, to watch and to successfully checkmate whom, would require a permanent standing army of police and detectives, at least as numerous as the militia.

REV. DR. WILD has been ordered by his medical attendant to drink ale and he does so. The members of the First Congregational Church of London, Ont., wish him to act as their pastor during April and May. He has, according to the deacons, acted most generously towards the church, having previously filled the pulpit for sundry periods of time, and yet the secretary thought fit to denounce him at a congregational meeting as one given over to drink and as a professional wind-bag. Dr. Wild has also been ordered not to take tea or coffee. Apart from the fact that this little incident proves that the beverages favored by the Prohibitionists are not always healthful, we cannot help thinking that the secretary must be of that stripe of men to whom religion is a mere password and true Christianity an impossibility. There are many like him.

"TO-DAY," says ex-Governor Long, of Massachusetts, an unfortunate State that is at sixes and sevens, its towns oftentimes undoing to-day what they did yesterday, "all classes throughout the union mention the name of General Neal Dow with respect." "All classes of the union" would deserve something worse than the severest condemnation if they did not respect a man ninety years of age who had fought and bled for his country, whatever their views of the cause he has consistently advocated are told for upwards of seventy years. Age, however, unfortunately does not always bring breadth of heart or improvement of men-

tal vision, but frequently brings crabbedness and a confirmation of narrowness. We respect Neal Dow for his consistency and for his grey hairs, but we do not admire his views any more than we did thirty years ago. And, furthermore, we regret that his example is one rather of encouragement to the unreasoning than to the thoughtful. Truthfulness is all right, but when it come down to a blind case of trust the system does not go far in this world.

EVERYBODY is not aware that Abraham Lincoln, the most beloved if not the greatest of United States Presidents, once kept a grocery and liquor store in New Salem. This, of course, was in the days when liquor was sold at nearly every grocery. But no liquor could be sold in less quantity than one quart without a tavern license. The law, however, was not always strictly enforced, and it was the custom of storekeepers to set up the drinks to their patrons. President Lincoln and a partner named Berry owned three such stores. They bought for the sole purpose of selling it, and it is easy to guess that they found no difficulty in making sales in a community in which liquor-drinking was practically universal. It is known that they operated their stores for some time, and after paying \$7 for the privilege of selling liquor by the dram it is hardly probable that they neglected to avail themselves of it. Mr. Lamont, an old friend and biographer of the martyr president, says that he "took his dram when asked to play seven-up at night, at which he made a good game." In fact it was good old Abe's boast that while he drank nobody ever saw him stagger.

We last week suggested that our temperance friends would do well to assure us of good drinking water before taking away our other potables, and in view of a recent paragraph in that warm exponent of their views, the *Toronto Globe*, we would beg to reiterate that suggestion. Our contemporary says: "A gentleman in the north-eastern part of the city, observing the milky appearance of the water in the last few days, had a quantity of it boiled. It was poured into an open-mouthed jug at 9.15 on Sunday morning and put into a cool, airy shed. On Monday evening the gentleman examined his sample and found that it emitted a most disagreeable odor. The *Globe* staff had an opportunity of verifying this fact, and there are a number of witnesses to the fact that the odor of the water would lead one to believe that it had been taken from a stagnant pool in the dog-days instead of being boiled city water not more than 36 hours from the tap." We dare to affirm that impure water causes more sickness and death in a week than whiskey or beer does in a score of years. One thing certain is that impure water is never summoned to save human life, while wholesome whiskey such as our big firms like Gooderham & Worts, Walker & Son and J. E. Seagram turn out is frequently called upon. In fact it is in cases of typhoid fever, caused mainly by unboiled water, that whiskey becomes the doctor's great assistant.